

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS:

Claims 1-2 and 7-20 remain in this application. Claims 3-4 have been previously canceled and claim 6-7 are hereby cancelled as well. Claims 1, 9 and 15 have been amended to more clearly and particularly point out the invention.

35 USC s 102 Claim Rejections

Claims 9, 10, 12 and 13 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Gabby et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,328,217). In order to more clearly claim the invention, claim 9 has been amended to state, inter alia, "a predetermined amount of food-safe coarse materials sized and shaped into a tablet resembling a coffee bean." Unlike Applicant, Gabby does not teach, suggest or imply that the food safe materials are sized into a tablet that resembles a coffee bean. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the objections to claims 9-14 are obviated.

Claims 15-17 and 20 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Kramer (U.S. Patent No. 5,462,427). To more clearly claim the invention, Claim 15 has been amended to include, inter alia, "a pressing machine for pressing the first and second halves of the mold together at a predetermined force for combining the food-safe materials into an object that is sized and shaped to resemble a coffee bean." Kramer does not teach shaping and sizing materials to resemble a coffee bean. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the objections to claims 15-17 and 20 are obviated.

35 USC s 102 Claim Rejections

Claims 1 and 5-7 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Tea and Coffee Trade Journal ("Levin") in view of Ford et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,865,383) and further in view of Mrs. Fixit ("McGraw"). In response to the Examiner's claim rejection, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate claims 5 and 6 to recite, inter alia, "apportioning a predetermined amount of a cleaning material, wherein the cleaning material is in the form of a tablet shaped and sized to resemble a coffee bean."

In the rejection, the Examiner states that Levin teaches that one can clean their coffee grinder after grinding strong flavored coffees by grinding non-descript regular coffee and that Levin inherently teaches that the grinder is soiled with oils and grinding residue because it grinds coffee, which inherently contains oil and the coffee residue will remain on the grinder. Next, Ford is cited for teaching the manner in which

coffee may be purged from a grinder. This teaching is then applied to the coffee cleaning materials as claimed by applicant. Finally, McGraw is cited for teaching that rice may be used in a coffee grinder, which is a different material than what is typically ground in a coffee grinder. McGraw is also cited for the proposition that grains of rice and coffee beans are similar in shape and therefore the cleaning material is a tablet that is shaped and sized to correspond to the material that the grinding machine grinds, namely a coffee bean shape.

Applicant respectfully but emphatically disagrees that a grain of rice and a coffee bean are similar in size and shape. In fact, as shown in the attached picture (Exhibit A), coffee beans are significantly bigger in size and very different in shape than grains of rice. This difference in size and shape leads to different performance characteristics between applicants coffee bean shaped cleaning tablets and grains of rice, when used to clean burrs in a coffee grinding machine. In particular, the grains of rice are so relatively small relative to coffee beans that they are susceptible to falling between the burrs and remaining there, rather than being ground like coffee beans or the tablets described herein. As additional rice is used in subsequent cleanings, rice continues to accumulate. This occasionally results in a cake of rice that is strong enough to prevent the revolutions of the burrs, resulting in a major risk of burning out a motor. In addition, because of the rice's physical and chemical properties, when ground, the rice leaves a starchy/dusty residue in the grinder that is not removed easily. In contrast, Applicant's materials are sized so that they do not get stuck within the grinding machine (just as coffee beans do not). They are simply ground up. The problematic phenomenon associated with using rice as a cleaner in grinding machines is evidenced in the attached internet discussion forum excerpt that specifically also mentions Applicant's Grindz product (Exhibit B), which is the commercial and trademarked implementation of the instant patent application.

Claim 8 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Tea and Coffee Trade Journal ("Levin") in view of Ford et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,865,383), in view of Mrs. Fixit ("McGraw") and further in view of Hollander (U.S. PGPub 2005/0026798). However, in light of the claim amendments above, the rejections should be obviated.

Claims 9 and 14 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takada et al (U.S. PGPub 2002/0183261) in view of Hollander (U.S. PGPub 2005/0026798). However, in light of the claim amendments above, the rejections should be obviated.

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gabby. In light of the claim amendments above, the rejection should be obviated.

Claims 18-19 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kramer. In light of the claim amendments above, the rejection should be obviated.

It is respectfully submitted that the instant application is now in condition for allowance, which allowance is earnestly solicited.

By 

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EXHIBIT A



Coffee Bean and Rice Art

By nosmallfeet Favorite Comment

by **shadowfax** on Jan 07, 2010, 2:56 pm

I've experienced the 'excessive' hardness of normal rice before--jasmine rice IIRC. I put it in my Nino at an espresso grind and it caused the motor to bind. I instantly shut off the grinder and loosened it up dramatically before grinding again. The coarser setting reduced the motor torque by enough to let it grind the rice. I can't offer anything more concrete than that, but I don't think I'd ever put normal rice in my \$2000 grinder again... it's clear that it's much harder than espresso-roasted coffee beans, and I'd rather not flirt with the line between seasoning and excess wear. Sounds like minute rice has potential, though. I would look for a rice that has the lowest density possible, as that probably correlates closely with its hardness.

Personally, I just use Grindz every few weeks (for cleaning), though Grindz is not a cost effective solution for seasoning--it seems pretty soft and also more expensive than coffee.

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by **five and dime** on Jan 07, 2010, 3:10 pm

shadowfax wrote:

I've experienced the 'excessive' hardness of normal rice before--jasmine rice IIRC. I put it in my Nino at an espresso grind and it caused the motor to bind. I instantly shut off the grinder and loosened it up dramatically before grinding again. the coarser setting reduced the motor torque by enough to let it grind the rice. I can't offer anything more concrete than that, but I don't think I'd ever put normal rice in my \$2000 grinder again... it's clear that it's much harder than espresso-roasted coffee beans, and I'd rather not flirt with the line between seasoning and excess wear. Sounds like minute rice has potential, though. I would look for a rice that has the lowest density possible, as that probably correlates closely with its hardness.

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Good tip! Happened to me with my SJ and I had to open her up and clean the rice out of the burrs with a dental pick as it was glazed to the surfaces and not coming out by grinding!! I recommend tying the minute rice over the uncooked stuff.

-Lane

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by **jammin** on Jan 07, 2010, 3:14 pm

^holy smokes(no pun intended) five and dime!

Thanks to you and shadowfax for sharing their experiences.

Sounds like minute rice is the only way to go.

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by **another_jim** on Jan 07, 2010, 5:34 pm

Whale wrote:

I have repeatedly read about using minute rice for cleaning as an alternative to grindz. I think that the general consensus is that it works but leaves a lot of rice dust behind.

The minute part is an old wives tale, I was under the impression that any white rice will do. However, I always used cheap long grain rice, nothing fancy like short grains or from the basmati family (e.g jasmine).

Rice is used to remove excess coffee oils. Sylvain is right, it's dusty and a PITA. Grindz does a much better job. I would say rice is an obsolete cleaning method.

I doubt rice or Grindz has any use in seasoning the burrs, since one of the objectives of seasoning is to give them a patina of coffee oils, not to remove those.

EXHIBIT B